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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM American Embassy, MOSCOW

TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

March 7, 1962

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 ADubs/RTDavies/
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REPORTER

FORM 5-61 FS-439 GPO 912506

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REVIEWED BY APR 25 1962 DATE 2/27/62

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EXTERNAL - POLITICAL

1. Khrushchev Makes Scarcely Veiled Attack on Chinese. The opening passages of Khrushchev's March 5 report to the CPSU Central Committee plenum took issue with unidentified "opponents". Khrushchev attributed qualities to these opponents which any communist would regard as highly insulting. He compared them with the early Christians, called them ascetics and idealists, and labelled their theories vulgar and perverted. He accused them of presenting communism as an equalization of poverty. From phrases and quotations used by Khrushchev, it seemed that he was responding to someone else's arguments, perhaps a document which has not been made public. Khrushchev's method of arguing would tend to confirm reports that the Chinese Communists have circulated criticism of the new CPSU Program within the Communist movement or at least to leaders of bloc communist parties.

Although Khrushchev nowhere identified these opponents as Chinese, there can be little doubt that these are whom he had in mind.

In his speech Khrushchev in effect proclaimed a "USSR-First" policy, saying quite plainly that the USSR's duty to the world movement lies in building communism in the USSR and providing an attractive example to workers of capitalist countries. He did not discuss how or when other socialist countries would move on from "socialism" to "communism." But according to the logic of his arguments, this would be a problem for these countries themselves to work out, aided perhaps by what the USSR can spare after fulfillment of its main task of raising the Soviet Union's living standard.

The main thrust of Khrushchev's speech must have been disappointing to the Chinese Communists, whose interests would be better served if the major Soviet effort were directed indefinitely to expansion of heavy industry to support Chinese industrialization and thus to offer the Chinese some hope of a rise in living standard within the 20th Century.

Although most other speakers at the plenum (according to the texts printed in Pravda) did not get into the larger ideological questions, most of them referred to Khrushchev's speech as an important theoretical pronouncement. One speaker (Spiridonov, First Secretary of Leningrad Oblast and member of the CPSU Secretariat) referred to Khrushchev's speech as a new weapon in the struggle against dogmatism and leftist sectarians. Spiridonov did not even mention revisionism, which in the past invariably has been balanced against dogmatism and sectarianism as a danger besetting contemporary communism.

2. Disarmament And Nuclear Testing. The subject of disarmament received regular attention over the past week through the publication, spread out over a period of days, of the full texts of messages on the forthcoming 18-nation conference that had been exchanged between Khrushchev and almost all of the heads of government whose nations are represented on the committee. While the Khrushchev messages repeated arguments for the participation of heads of government in the initial phase of the negotiations, it would not be difficult to conclude, from reading between the lines, that the response of non-bloc leaders to the proposal had been cool. Firm indication that the disarmament

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With respect to nuclear testing, the general line taken by the Soviet press was that the US announcement regarding the possible resumption of atmospheric testing represented an aggressive step which served to worsen the international atmosphere and indicated that the US was prepared to condemn the Geneva negotiations on disarmament to failure. The President's assertion that US tests need not begin if there were timely Soviet acceptance of Western requirements for inspection and control was only obliquely referred to in initial Soviet reaction and never spelled out explicitly in later comment which generally characterized the offer as a policy of dictation and blackmail unacceptable to the Soviet Union.

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With the exception of N. V. PODGORNYY, who was presumably still at his post in Kiev, all the full Presidium members turned out on March 2 for a visit to the All-Union Art Exhibition. The visit bore the character of a political demonstration, since the Art Exhibition has been running for four and a half months and there seemed no particular reason why it should now become the object of a mass descent by the Presidium. Perhaps the members of the leadership simply wanted to show themselves in serried ranks on the eve of the Plenum as a sign that they were all still present, accounted for, and "collective."

At the Art Exhibition, they were greeted by a number of artists, outstanding and otherwise (including KROKODIL's triune cartoonist, the Kukryniksy), and by Ye. A. FURTSEVA, the Minister of Culture, whose name was placed in press reports below those of the welcoming artists, one more clear sign of the ~~reversal~~ change in her status since the XXII Party Congress. (Press

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reports of the reception staged by the Ministry of Culture in honor of the departing Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra, placed her name after that of the American Ambassador -- Pravda, February 23).

Khrushchev received the Syrian Minister of Defense and Education, Rashid BARMAD, on March 3, and, on the same day A. I. MIKOYAN, flew off to Berlin and Leipzig, ostensibly to participate in the opening of the Leipzig Fair, actually to underline the support for the East German regime which the Soviet Government now wishes to emphasize. He was seen off at Vnukova Airport by his fellow First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, A. N. KOSYGIN, by the Minister of Foreign Trade, N. S. PATOLICHEV, and by the Chairman of the State Security Committee, V. Ye. SEMICHASTNYY, whose presence somehow recalled the interest his predecessor, L. P. BERIYA, had once displayed in East German affairs.

At Sheremetyevo Airport on March 3, Central Committee Secretary B. N. PONOMAREV was returning from his trip to Hanoi and being greeted by his fellow-secretary, A. N. SHELEPIN.

The Central Committee Plenum opened on March 5. The next day, Mikoyan returned to Moscow. Since N. V. PODGORNYY, the Ukrainian Party First Secretary, had come to town for the Plenum, this meant that the eleven full members of the Presidium of the Central Committee were all in one place at one time, as they have not been -- so far as one can judge from the Soviet press -- since the XXII Congress. Ten of the eleven were present at a concert staged for participants in the Plenum on March 7. Only M. A. SUSLOV remained aloof from the festivities, but he was on hand the next day for a meeting in honor of "International" Woman's Day, the party-linging version of Mother's Day.

Of the 21 members of the top Party organs -- the 11 full and 5 candidate members of the Presidium and the 5 non-Presidium Secretaries -- only two were not on public view during the week.

CC Secretary and Moscow City Committee First Secretary P. N. DEMICHEV was not noted among his colleagues in press reports subsequent to Pravda's March 4 announcement that he had "recently" been conducting a meeting of Moscow court and law-enforcement officials, obviously designed to give effect to the new laws extending the death penalty (WEEKKA No. 9, March 2). He had earlier, on March 2, addressed his electors (Pravda, March 3) at a meeting in Moscow.

This week's other absence, that of the Byelorussian Party First Secretary, K. T. MAZUROV, appeared more significant.

MAZUROV was the only candidate-member of the Presidium whose election speech had not been carried in the Moscow press. The speeches of his fellow-candidates, GRISHIN (Pravda, February 27), MZHAVANADZE (Pravda, March 3), RASHIDOV (Pravda, March 2), and SHCHERBITSKIY (Pravda, March 2), have all seen the light of day. There has so far been no sign that Mazurov is present at the Plenum. His name did not appear with those of his colleagues in the reports of the Kremlin concert of March 7 or of the March 8 celebration of

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International Woman's Day. At the First Secretariat of every other Union-Republic Party have addressed the Plenum, Byelorussia was represented only by a subsidiary Secretary. F. A. SURGANOV...

The Byelorussian leadership has been under heavy attack since the XXII CPSU Congress for its agricultural failures. Moreover, Moscow observers now recall one of the wilder versions of the rumor regarding an attempt on Khrushchev's life while he was in Minsk (Embassy's A-623, February 2), according to which Khrushchev and Mazurov had come to blows at the Minsk agricultural conference. (An even wilder variant of this rumor had Mazurov pulling a gun on Khrushchev.)

During the "putting forward" (vydvizheniye) of the names of potential candidates for the Supreme Soviet, however (Despatch No. 743, February 23; WEEKA No. 7, February 16), Mazurov had received a normal quotient of two "nominations" and had subsequently been registered as a candidate for the Soviet of the Union in the First Minsk City election district (Pravda, Feb. 23).

Unless Mazurov is ill, his absence from the Plenum is extraordinary.

5. "This Way To The Egress". LENIN's Mausoleum is again open for visitors. The wooden barricade placed around the tomb on Red Square has been removed (WEEKA No. 5, Feb. 2). A visit to the tomb on February 8 showed that internally very little had been changed. Lenin's sarcophagus is now centered in the space it formerly shared with that of STALIN. Externally, a huge slab of polished black granite has been mounted over the door with the letters "L-E-N-I-N" carefully inlaid in red granite matching the stone used on the exterior of the rest of the tomb. A slight crack in this slab indicated that there may have been some difficulties in inserting it and may have been partially responsible for the extended period taken by the "repairs": six weeks.

The crowds seem to move faster through the tomb than before. In part, this may be because of the attraction outside. P. T. Barnum's "egress" could scarcely have drawn the crowds out of his New York museum any faster than I. V. Stalin's grave pulls them out of Lenin's mausoleum.

After respectfully filing past Lenin, the crowds hurry on to walk beneath the Kremlin wall where the red-and-dead of Soviet power are permanently laid to rest. Walking along with the crowd past various markers, one hears a rising volume of murmurs from people who wonder aloud where Stalin is buried.

On March 8, one man, apparently unable to repress his concern that he might miss seeing the grave, demanded of a soldier who was guarding the rear of the tomb, "Where's Stalin?" This question obviously was not new to the soldier. He gestured vaguely with his hand and said, "A little farther along."

At the grave itself, three out of four persons visibly displayed some kind of reaction. One young girl started to laugh, but suppressed it by clapping her hand over her mouth. A man in his late thirties screwed up his

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face in a wry expression. A man from the country pointed out the grave, indicating to his companions that at last they had come to the spot. A boy of about 14 who all along had been asking his accompanying grandmother when they would come to Stalin, pointed to the marker, saying, "There, grandma!" An Air Force officer looked on expressionlessly, as did the man who had demanded of the guard, "Where's Stalin?"

Continuing along the walk under the wall leading from the grave area behind the tomb, the man in the scarf was approached by a second man, apparently not a Russian, who asked him why Stalin's grave had no pedestal and bust erected over it, like several others in the area. "Scarf" replied that this was probably because the grave was new. A moment later, upon reflection, he added that a pedestal might never be erected for Stalin, and quickly walked away.

6. Purge of Tadzhik Minister of Education and Komsomol Secretariat. The replacement of Tair PULATOV by M. S. ASIMOV as Minister of Education in the Tadzhik SSR was reported on February 24 by Kommunist Tadzhikistana. The newspaper also carried an account of a February 23 plenum of the Central Committee of the Tadzhik Communist Party at which Pulatov was criticized, among other things, for having chosen personnel on the basis of "personal devotion and local ties [zemlyachestvo]"

The Tadzhik Party's Second Secretary, I. G. KOVAL, in a detailed report to the plenum on deficiencies in the republic's educational system, complained about "injurious survivals of the past in the attitude towards women -- especially the education and training of girls of the local nationality." He charged that even Communists and leading workers are among parents who criminally obstruct their daughters' education in order to marry them off at an early age. He said that only 45 per cent of pupils of the "local nationality" are girls.

In a more direct assault upon local customs and Islam, he declared that it is an "intolerable situation when teachers permit immoral acts, behave themselves in an undignified manner, are under the influence of backward notions, observe outmoded rites, among them religious ones."

R. Yu. YUSUFBEKOV, chief of the Central Committee Section for Science, VUZes and Schools, was given a share of the blame, but was not criticized personally. There is no indication that he has been purged.

The XV Congress of the Tadzhikistan Komsomol on January 25-26, 1962, also addressed itself, in part, to the unsatisfactory state of education and apparently made a complete purge of its old Central Committee Secretariat. New members of the Secretariat, as reported by Kommunist Tadzhikistana on January 27, 1962, are: G. BOBOSADYKOVA, First Secretary; R. V. MAKAROV, Second Secretary; and A. KHISAMUTDINOV and A. ABDUNAZAROV, Secretaries. The former Second Secretary of the Central Committee of the Tadzhik Komsomol, V. A. NIKITIN, has been promoted to the position of chief of the Party Organs Section of the Central Committee, Tadzhik CP, replacing P. Z. SHABARDIN. Nikitin, at a Komsomol meeting in April, 1961, criticized the "passive position" of the Komsomol in the struggle against "survivals," "especially in the question of female labor and education."

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Other personnel changes in Tadzhikistan, not apparently related to those described above, are the release "for other work" of R. M. KURBANOV as chief of the Construction and Construction Materials Division of the Central Committee, and the replacement of I. A. KUZNETSOV by I. P. GAVRILIN as Chairman of the Party Commission.

7. Do-It-Yourself a la Russe: The "Repair-Druzhina" Movement Gains Momentum. The first conference of an organization which is called the "remdruzhina" (i.e., the remont družhina, or repair corps) has been held in Moscow's Leningradskiy rayon (Moskovskaya Pravda, March 4, 1962). The meeting was attended by 500 persons.

The remdruzhinniki are supposed to perform odd maintenance jobs in their neighborhoods, thus providing a prophylactic "stitch in time" needed to avoid later major repairs (WEEKA No. 51, December 22, 1961). Continued publicity, given the "splendid initiative" of Leningradskiy rayon in forming this do-it-yourself group is another indication that, as the USSR's inventory of mass-production, crudely finished apartment buildings increases, the regime is finding it ever more difficult to provide adequate repair facilities. The remdruzhinniki apparently are engaged in more than simple maintenance, for the Moskovskaya Pravda article states that the Leningradskiy rayon "druzhinniki take an active part, not only in prophylactic measures, but also in current repairs."

The repair-druzhina movement may be expected to grow, for it serves a real need in a sector of the Soviet economy where alternative remedies apparently cost too much and are beyond the current organizational capacity of the country. Moskovskaya Pravda puts it this way: "The movement of the remdruzhinniki is taking on more of a mass character.... The creation of a repair corps is a big step on the path to self-government, to the preservation and longevity of the entire housing resources of the state, to the normalization of Communist interdependence in living relationships. And that means it is necessary to create such druzhiny everywhere."

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2. (U) Syrian Military Delegation.

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For the Ambassador:

Boris H. Klosson

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Counselor for Political Affairs

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